Assessing the Multicultural Competence of School Psychologists in Arizona and Wisconsin

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ABSTRACT

Students in the education system are becoming increasingly diverse, while school psychologists continue to be a homogeneous group. To provide necessary and competent services, school psychologists need to develop multicultural competence. The purpose of this study was to understand and analyze the perceived multicultural competence of school psychologists in the states of Wisconsin and Arizona. The study examined the extent to which school psychologists in Wisconsin and Arizona felt competent in providing services to students from diverse backgrounds, what areas of growth were needed to provide better services to diverse students, and if school psychologists in Wisconsin and Arizona were participating in continued training related to multicultural services.

Surveys were sent to school psychologists in Arizona and Wisconsin who held membership with the Arizona Association of School Psychologists (AASP) and the Wisconsin School Psychologists Association (WSPA). A total of 108 surveys were used for data analysis. The majority of school psychologists in the study were Caucasian, female, and practicing school psychologists. Participants from Arizona had higher mean scores on the questions than subjects from Wisconsin, indicating school psychologists from Arizona self-perceived themselves to be more competent than participants in Wisconsin. Participants from Arizona participated in multicultural training more frequently. Both groups received most of their multicultural training from graduate classes or workshops. School psychologists from Arizona and Wisconsin indicated they needed more training with consultation, intervention, and prevention services.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Across the United States the population is becoming increasingly diverse. Today's society is more multilingual, multicultural, and multiethnic, and this trend is expected to be even greater in the future (Passel & Cohn, 2008). According to the 2000 United States Census, the population includes 75.1% Caucasians, 12.3% Black or African Americans, 3.6% Asians, 0.9% American Indians or Alaskan Natives, 0.1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders, 5.5% of some other race, and 2.4% of two or more races (United States Census Bureau, 2001a). Various ethnic groups have been growing consistently since the 1990 census and the change in various demographic populations will only continue to increase. For example, since 1990 the Latino population has had a 57.9% increase in population growth and the African American population has increased by 15.6% (United States Census Bureau, 2001b; United States Census Bureau, 2001c).

The population of school-age children is projected to continue this trend well over the next four decades (Kindler, 2002; United States Census Bureau, 2001d). Growing patterns, particularly for the Latino population, are expected to reach 29% (almost double the current total 16%) of the total school-age population by the year 2050. By the year 2050, it is estimated that the U.S. population will increase by approximately 50% compared to what it was in 2000 (United States Census Bureau, 2001d). As this trend continues, all educators, particularly school psychologists who will be working with a diverse student body, will need to develop their skills and expertise to provide services to fit the needs of the multicultural student population.

In addition, findings from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported the number of students who speak a language other than English at home has doubled from 1979 to 2006 (United States Department of Education, 2006). In 1979, only 9% of students in the educational system spoke a language other than English, while in 2006, the number of students

speaking a language other than English increased to 20% (United States Department of Education, 2006). Lastly, there are over 400 different languages spoken in the schools (United States Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2008).

The growth in population of students from various cultural groups provides clear information about the amount of cultural and ethnic diversity in the United States. In midwestern states such as Wisconsin, there has been a 77% increase in the number of students speaking a language other than English from 1990-2000 (United States Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2002a). Whereas in Southwestern states, particularly Arizona, between 1990-2000 there has been a 78% increase of students speaking a language other than English (United States Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2002b). Populations of various groups are also increasing in each state's public schools. For example, in Arizona during the 1999-2000 school year, 33% of the student population was of Hispanic background. Furthermore, for the 2008-2009 school year, there was a 42% enrollment of students from Hispanic background (Arizona Department of Education, 2009a).

Like Arizona, the number of diverse and multicultural students has been increasing in Wisconsin. During the 1999-2000 school year, 4.1% of the student population was from a Hispanic background (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2009a). For the 2008-2009 school year, 8% of the student population was Hispanic (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2009a). According to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), there are over 85 different languages spoken in Wisconsin Public Schools (2005). The 2000 Decennial Census also found that across the nation 30.8% of the student population was Latino, 26.8% was African American, 5.0% was Asian, 5.1% was multi-racial, and 11.7 % was some other single race (United States Department of Education, 2005). Although most Latino students live in

predominantly highly populated Spanish-speaking states (Texas, Florida, and California), it should be noted that foreign-born Latino students are more likely than Native-born Latino students to live in "emerging" Hispanic states (Arkansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin) (Fry & Gonzales, 2008). Trends in the general population tend to reflect trends in the school population, and as such, pupil service providers will need to address this growing need by having culturally competent professionals.

As the population of students in various cultural groups increases, school psychologists in particular are called upon to be prepared and knowledgeable in working with students from various diverse backgrounds (e.g. racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, gender, social class, those with disabilities, etc.) (Oakland, 2005; Ridley & Kleiner, 2003; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). School psychologists need to be ready to work with diverse populations in areas of individual and group counseling, consultation with parents and other school staff, assessments, and interventions (Ridley & Kleiner, 2003; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Furthermore, school psychologists need to have multicultural competence in the areas of personal beliefs and attitudes, knowledge of other cultural worldviews, and skills to apply culturally sensitive practices and interventions (Holcomb-McCoy, 1999; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). School psychologists need to develop multicultural competence not only because of the growing diverse student population, but also because of the demographic make-up of the members in the field. According to a 2004-2005 survey of the National Association of School Psychologist (NASP) members, 92.6% are Caucasian and 74% are women (Curtis, Lopez, Castillo, Batsche, Minch, & Smith, 2008). Additionally, Curtis, Hunley, Walker, and Baker (1999) found that only 5.5% of school psychologists are people of color. The 2004-2005 NASP membership survey also found that only about 10.7% of practicing school psychologists report to be fluent in a language

other than English (Curtis, Lopez, Batsche, & Smith, 2006). The demographic information from NASP highlights that while the students in the educational school system are increasingly diverse and multicultural, the professionals providing the services are consistently more Caucasian (Fagan & Wise, 2007). Due to this disparity in ethnic and cultural differences, school psychologists need to be able to provide culturally competent services.

Even though the multicultural competency initiative has been around since the 1970s, there is still a need to develop and refine the development of one's multicultural competence (Ridley & Kleiner, 2003). For example, the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health (2003) explained that despite the fact that there has been current research in the field, progress has been slow in making systematic changes and implementations to treatment outcomes. As a whole, various cultural populations are inappropriately being served in regards to mental health, with some populations being over diagnosed for certain disorders and being under diagnosed in other disorders (The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, 2003). Most providers are not prepared to work with ethnically and culturally diverse groups, and in return, some group members may develop mistrust of mental health providers, view illness and mental health differently from mainstream traditional American views, have different views on communication and help seeking behaviors, and experience discrimination and racism (Gibbs & Huang, 1998; The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, 2003; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). As a whole, school psychologists are being called upon to be mental health providers in the schools. A topic of concern has been addressed in *School Psychology: A Blue Print for Training and Practice III,* in which training programs as well as practicing school psychologists are called have more background knowledge

on providing mental health services in schools (Ysseldyke, Burns, Dawson, Kelley, Morrison, Ortiz, Rosenfield, & Telzrow, 2006).

In schools, students of color are still overrepresented in areas of special education (Loe & Miranda, 2005). For example, the National Research Council's Committee of Minority Representation in Special Education (2002) found that African American students have a 135% greater chance than Caucasians of being identified as mentally retarded (MR) and a 59% greater chance of being identified as Emotionally Disturbed (ED). Native Americans/Alaskan Natives also had a 24% greater chance than Caucasians of being identified as having a learning disability (LD) and a 12% greater chance than Caucasians of being identified as ED (National Research Council, Committee of Minority Representation in Special Education, 2002).

Concerning counseling diverse populations, Constantine (2002) found in his study, *Predictors of Satisfaction With Counseling: Racial and Ethnic Minority Clients Attitudes Toward Counseling and Ratings of Their Counselors' General and Multicultural Counseling Competence,* the counselor's level of multicultural competence can help develop the counseling relationship with clients of color. While working with counselors who are more multiculturally competent, the clients of color viewed the counseling sessions more favorably and left the counseling experience feeling more satisfied (Constantine, 2002). Steward, Wright, Jackson, and Han (1998) also found White counselors who had multicultural training were able to discern between culturally sensitive and culturally insensitive counseling sessions. Additionally, studies conducted by Sue and Sue (2003) found that school service professionals working with diverse groups can potentially cause harm. Sue and Sue (2003) stated that, "counseling and psychotherapy have done great harm to culturally diverse groups by invalidating their life experiences, by defining their cultural values or differences as deviant and pathological, and by

denying them culturally appropriate care, and by imposing the values of the dominant culture upon them" (p. 8).

Regarding assessment of culturally and linguistically diverse students (CLD), most school psychologists are not prepared to provide adequate assessment of students of color or English Language Learners (ELL). School psychologists are often lacking in skills of how to conduct bilingual assessment as well as having a clear understanding of the acquisition process of a second language (Ochoa, Rivera, & Ford, 1997). More recently, in a study entitled "*An Examination of Ethnic Incongruence in School-Based Psychological Services and Diversity-Training Experiences Among School Psychologist*," Loe and Miranda (2005) found school psychologists experienced high ethnic incongruence (ethnic differences between two individuals) in providing assessment, counseling, and consultation services to their clients. Their findings suggest that while students come from a wide variety of ethnic and minority groups, school psychologists are still ethnically homogeneous (Loe & Miranda, 2005). Thus, in order to provide services to students, school psychologists as a whole need to expand their training and develop the skills necessary to work with the diverse student body.

In the area of research practices, some progress seems to appear with a broader focus on multicultural issues. For example, in a literature review of articles published between 1990-1999, Miranda and Gutter (2002) found that only 10.6% of the articles presented in the four major school psychology publications had multicultural content. More recently, Brown, Shriberg, and Wang (2007) found that 16.9% of the articles published between 2000-2003 had multicultural content, indicating that in recent years researchers are focusing on addressing issues that pertain to the increase in CLD population in the United States.

Even though progress has been made in helping school psychologists develop their

multicultural competence, research indicates more training and a stronger understanding of diverse groups needs to take place. One area of support for multicultural competence is within the professional organizations of school psychologists. For example, the *Professional Conduct Manual for School Psychologists* explains that school psychologists are to have the sensitivity, knowledge, and skills to work with individuals and groups with a diverse range of strengths and needs from a variety of racial, cultural, ethnic, experiential, and linguistic backgrounds (National Association of School Psychologists, 2000a). Along with NASP principles, *School Psychology: A Blueprint for Training and Practice III* (Ysseldyke et al., 2006) elevates skills in all aspects of cultural competency to one of the four foundational domains upon which the other domains of competency rest. Finally, NASP has also created a web page to provide resources on cultural competence and how it relates to the field of school psychology. These changes reflect NASP's commitment to culturally competent best practice.

In addition, the American Psychological Association (APA) has its own guidelines for multicultural education, practice, and research as well as ethical principles guiding its members (American Psychological Association, 2002a). For example, APA states in its *Ethical Principles* that, "Psychologists are aware of and respect cultural, individual, and role differences, including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status and consider these factors when working with members for such groups" (American Psychological Association, 2002b). These professional standards show the support of developing one's multicultural competence as being embedded into the profession; yet, it seems obvious that more training and experience are needed to help prepare school psychologists for the reality of the diverse populations of students they are going to encounter.

Although a substantial body of information has been conducted on assessing the multicultural competency of school psychologists, it has not been until recent years that researchers have acknowledged the importance of school psychologists' self-awareness as it relates to cultural-sensitive services (Ortiz, Flanagan, & Dynda, 2008; Rogers & Lopez, 2002). According to these researchers, culturally competent practitioners should have "an awareness of their own cultural characteristics, as well as an awareness of how their cultural backgrounds may affects services." With so many questions left unanswered, it is critical for researchers to continue to investigate the multicultural competencies of practicing school psychologists. Only through engaging in additional research will the inadequacies of training future school psychology service providers be revealed and ultimately remedied.

Statement of the Problem

Due to the large number of diverse students in the educational system and the generally homogeneous make-up of school psychologists in the field, school psychologists must develop and obtain the awareness, skills, and knowledge necessary to work with diverse student populations effectively and competently.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand and analyze the perceived multicultural competence of school psychologists in the states of Wisconsin and Arizona. Data was collected though a survey during the Winter of 2008.

Rationale for the Study

As previously stated, this study is a necessity as student diversity continues to increase. The study will assist school psychologists in understanding the history of multicultural competence, developing multicultural competent strategies, and defining the various roles school

psychologists have in working with diverse populations. The states of Wisconsin and Arizona were used because of the demographic make-up of the states and the familiarity of the researcher with the Wisconsin School Psychologist Association (WSPA). In addition, results from the study will help school psychologists, districts, and other governing bodies in Wisconsin and Arizona become aware of the various techniques, values, and perceived level of competence in working with a diverse student body.

Research Questions

The goal of the research is to understand and explore the perceived multicultural competence of school psychologists. The research questions of this study are:

1. Do school psychologists in Wisconsin and Arizona feel competent in providing services to students from diverse backgrounds?
2. In what areas do school psychologist in Wisconsin and Arizona feel they need growth in to provide competent multicultural services?
3. Are school psychologists in Wisconsin and Arizona participating in training to aid in the development of their own multicultural competence?

Definition of Terms

To understand the area of multicultural competence, certain terms need clarification. The terms are:

Culture: "The set of beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors shared by a group of people, who communicate from one generation to the next via language or some other means of communication" (Matsumoto, 1994).

Cultural Brokering: "The act of bridging, linking, or mediating between groups or persons of differing cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change (as

cited in The National Center for Cultural Competence, 2004).

English Language Learners: "English Language Learners (ELLs) are students whose first language is not English and who are in the process of learning English" (United States Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2006).

English as a Second Language: "English as a second language (ESL) is an educational approach in which English language learners are instructed in the use of the English language. Their instruction is based on a special curriculum that typically involves little or no use of the native language, focuses on language (as opposed to content) and is usually taught during specific school periods" (United States Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2006).

Ethnicity: "A micro-cultural group that shares a common history and culture, common values, behaviors, and other characteristics that cause members of the group to have a shared identity" (Banks & Banks, 1993; Trimble, 2003).

Multicultural competence: "A person who understands and develops their attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and skills that are needed to work with culturally diverse populations" (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).

Race: "A social construct with no scientific basis that categorizes people according to obvious physical differences such as skin color" (Koppelman & Goodhart, 2005. p. 378).

Worldview: "The way a person sees his or her relationship to other people, the world, institutions, and nature" (Sue & Sue, 2003).

Assumptions and Limitations

The assumptions and limitations of this study provide the boundaries of what the research will include. The assumption of the study is that the researcher will develop a study to

understand multicultural competence in the field of school psychology. The personal bias of the researcher limits what vast information is included or excluded. The limitation of the study centers on numerous accounts that surveys are not the best format for understanding multicultural competence and they are only measuring the perceived level of multicultural competence by the subjects. Since the surveys are subjective, the subjects may be answering the questions based on what they think the researcher may want to hear. Additionally, the data may not be representative of the entire school psychologist population in Wisconsin or Arizona because those who are interested in multicultural issues may be more inclined to complete the survey. Nonetheless, it is believed that the benefits of this study will far outweigh the limitations.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter will include a discussion of the literature pertaining to multicultural competence of school psychologists. The topics to be discussed are the history of multicultural competence, training and development of multicultural competence, training programs and certification requirements of school psychologists in Wisconsin and Arizona, the role of school psychologists in working with diverse populations, and an exploration of the instruments used to assess multicultural competence.

History of Multicultural Competence

From a historical perspective, the concept of multicultural competence in the field of school psychology is a relatively young one. Interest in multicultural competence evolved around the 1970s. The Vail Conference on Professional Training in Psychology, held in 1973, started the push for practitioners to become more aware of diversity issues and understand that to provide services to diverse clients, practitioners need to be culturally competent, otherwise they could be providing inappropriate unethical treatment (Ridley & Kleiner, 2003). In 1977, Sue and Sue, the current authors of many multicultural articles, wrote an article entitled *Barriers to Effective Cross-Cultural Counseling* (cited in Ridley & Kleiner, 2003). This article discussed the importance of counselors needing to be competent in working with other groups and how communication barriers may arise if the counselor does not understand the client's cultural messages (cited in Ridley & Kleiner, 2003). Specifically, in school psychology, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) began to address some diversity issues in the schools (Rogers, 2005).

In 1978, NASP stated in its *Standards for Training Programs in School Psychology*, that graduate training programs needed to incorporate diversity curriculum (Rogers, 2005). These

events created a stepping-stone for the members in the fields of counseling and psychology to become interested and involved in research, application, and training of diversity issues for school psychologists. In 1982, Sue and other colleagues wrote a paper addressing the competencies needed to work with diverse populations (cited in Ridley & Kleiner, 2003). The article by Sue described the competencies of beliefs/attitudes, knowledge, and skills which are still ever-present in the field today and serve as the foundation for developing multicultural competence.

The American Psychological Association (APA) also showed commitment to areas of diversity and multicultural competence. For example, in 1984, APA began developing divisions for practitioners in the field to obtain resources and serve the diverse population (American Psychological Association, 2002a). Throughout the years, APA added various guidelines for working with diverse populations and included statements in the *Code of Ethics* regarding competent practice and working with diverse clients (American Psychological Association, 2002b). Along with APA, the field of school psychology continued to form its own ethical standards for its practitioners working with diverse students. From 1984-1985, NASP added to its *Principles for Professional Ethics* that psychologists needed to have respect for diverse people (mentally, culturally, politically, etc), needed to be able to communicate with people from diverse backgrounds, and needed to use nondiscriminatory practices (Rogers, 2005).

In the area of research, from the mid 1980's to the beginning of the 1990's, a few articles began to appear on topics of multicultural training, particularly assessing ones competence (Ridley & Kleiner, 2003). However, the real push in the field began around the early to mid 1990's when Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992) made a call to the profession. The goal of their article was to explore the need for multicultural training in graduate programs, to propose

standards and competencies to be a part of the profession, and to advocate for a call to the profession as a whole (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Even though ten years earlier Sue and Sue (1982) addressed the competencies, they did not feel the profession, as a whole, was moving forward (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). After the publication of this article, more articles began to appear to address theories, assessments, strategies centering on multicultural applications, and a strong push from the professional organizations. For example, in 1992, NASP revised its ethical principles to include lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth (Rogers, 2005). In addition, training in areas of bilingual assessment and interventions became an integral part of the school psychologist's profession (Rogers, 2005).

Currently, there is dedication from professional organizations, researchers, and those in the field to help train and develop school psychologists' multicultural competence. There are many different theories, assessment tools and strategies to become more aware and competent. Additionally, some graduate-training programs are dedicated to preparing students to work with the diverse school population. However, there is still an immediate need to continue on the path of developing one's awareness of his or her beliefs and attitudes, knowledge, and skills to work and provide effective services.

Development of Multicultural Competence

Race, culture, ethnicity, and other factors have been recognized as important variables in school psychology service delivery practice, mental health services, and education (Ortiz, Flanagan, & Dynda, 2008; Rogers & Lopez, 2002). Despite the increasing diversity of the United States population, particularly within the school system, training and education toward multicultural competency development remains largely inadequate. Many professionals (i.e. Gupaul-McNicol, 1997; Pope-Davis & Dings, 1995; Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis; 1992) have

expressed a sense of urgency for the development of training guidelines to ensure appropriate culturally competent services for the growing range of individuals and groups who come from culturally/linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds. According to Sue, Arredondo and McDavis (1992), the main foundation of understanding and developing multicultural competencies comes from individuals developing skills, knowledge, and awareness. Additionally, within those broad areas, there are more specific competencies. For example, in a survey of school psychologists, Lopez and Rogers (2001) identified 89 competencies school psychologists should have to work effectively with diverse student populations such as having awareness, skills, and knowledge of cultural and language factors with assessment, consultation, and counseling. Most research seems to focus on the following categories of awareness, worldview and identity development, knowledge, and skills.

Awareness

The first broad category to focus on is developing awareness of one's own personal beliefs, values, and assumptions (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). In areas of counseling, counselors are called upon to "know thyself", and this is not any different for the area of multicultural competence (Sue & Sue, 2003). Developing awareness consists of becoming aware of one's own cultural background and heritage, understanding one's own values and attitudes, understanding differences between one's self and others, being knowledgeable about racism, discrimination, and stereotypes, and being aware of varying communication styles and the impact of the dominant culture upon the counselor's worldview (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). Fowers and Davidov (2006) also commented on how cultural self-exploration helps us become aware of how our backgrounds influence our perceptions and at times can be limiting (pg. 585).

Developing awareness has become an important component in developing multicultural competence (Lopez & Rogers, 2001; Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002; Richardson & Molinaro, 1996; Sue & Sue, 2003). In *Multicultural Counseling: Research on Perceptions of School Counselors*, Robinson and Bradley (2005) found rural school counselors held lower self awareness scores on the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI) than in areas of knowledge and skills. Robinson and Bradley (2005) suggested the findings were due to the fact that many graduate training programs focus on knowledge and skills and techniques to use with other cultures, but did not emphasize personal awareness. However, one wonders if it is the training programs future counselors attend or if it is that the counselors working in homogeneous communities are not given opportunities to examine their own awareness.

Worldview and Identity Development

Two ways to aid in the development of personal awareness are to understand one's worldview as well as one's racial identity. Worldview is the way a person sees his or her relationship to other people, the world, institutions, and nature (Sue & Sue, 2003). In 1999, Mahalik, Worthington, and Crump suggested there was a "therapist culture" based on the assumption the United States has it own particular values, indicating therapists with "American worldviews" may hold different worldviews from other ethnic and racial groups. For example, in an empirical review of value-orientations, Carter (1991) found white middle class Americans typically had future time orientations, while Latinos and Native Americans had present time orientations, and Blacks or African Americans had past time orientations. Hall (as cited in Bennett 2003), discusses that people from different cultures view the world differently and can be unaware of other ways to view the world. For example, in relation to interpersonal communication, Hall classifies cultures (United States, Germany, and Scandinavia) as low-

context where "meaning is gleaned from the verbal message itself" compared to high-context cultures (East Asian, Arab, Southern European, Native American, Mexican, and rural parts of the United States) where "meaning is understood in terms of the situation or setting in which communication takes place" (Bennett, 2003, p. 48). Communication as well as behaviors between the groups with different worldviews and being low-context or high context, can lead to cultural misunderstandings (Bennett, 2003). Based on various research findings, APA suggests increasing contact with other groups, developing trust, and increasing tolerance of others can help with personal awareness (2002a, pg. 25).

Another way to develop one's awareness is by understanding one's identity. Miranda (2002) believes culture develops ones identity. Where we grow up, our heritage and our experiences all shape and impact our identity development. It is a life long process integrating all of our experiences (Tatum, 1997). Vinson and Niemeyer (2000) implemented a study to understand the relationship between white racial identity development and multicultural competence. They found more developed racial identities were generally related to higher levels of multicultural competence. In a more recent study, Middelton, Stadler, Simpson, Guo, Brown, Crow, Schuck, Alemu, and Lazarte (2005) investigated the relationship between mental health practitioners' (clinical psychologists, counseling psychologists, and counselors) white racial identity development and self-reported multicultural competence. Like Vinson and Niemeyer (2000), Middelton and his colleagues (2005) found mental health professionals who held higher levels of identity development self-reported higher multicultural competencies. As personal awareness is the basis of developing ones multicultural competence, developing knowledge of working with various groups and other identities is the next step.

Knowledge

Like awareness, knowledge is another critical component in developing multicultural competence. The goal for the knowledge area is for school psychologists to have a solid understanding of diverse groups in relation to their history and heritage, group characteristics, and social and educational historical barriers affecting each group as a whole (Sue, Ivey, & Pedersen, 1996). Sue and Sue (2003) also suggest by gaining knowledge about other groups, the professional is a more effective helper. For example, Bidell (2005) explained, for counselors to work effectively with lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients (LGB), those counselors needed to know and understand the LGB sociocultural history, biases in the mental health care system, and intra-group diversity.

To develop school psychologists' knowledge of different groups, a number of experiences have been proposed. More traditional approaches focus on reading books, attending workshops and conferences, and taking multicultural classes. Other non-traditional ways focus on experiential components. For example, Alexander, Kruczek, and, Ponterotto (2005) explained how having counseling students in an international immersion practicum experience within another culture helped them apply what they learned in the classroom to work with diverse groups. Additionally, the international immersion experiences helped counseling students learn about the unique needs of individuals within various global cultures (Alexander, Kruczek, & Ponterotto, 2005).

In study conducted by Dejud (2007), it was found that school psychology students attending a five-week cultural immersion experience in Mexico increased their language abilities and knowledge of the Mexican school system and culture from participation in the experience. Along with international immersion experiences, immersion experiences in the United States can

be just as beneficial, such as having experiences in large urban areas. For example, Loe and Miranda (2005) suggested school psychologists should be exposed to diverse groups of students in their practicum and internship placements. Similar with immersion experiences, Kim and Lyons (2003) suggested using experiential activities in the classroom to increase knowledge. The use of experiential games in the classroom provided students an opportunity to show what they learned about different groups and at the same time provided a safe environment to explore stereotypes and personal views (Kim & Lyons, 2003).

Skills

The third component to developing multicultural competence is skills, where school psychologists apply their knowledge and awareness to develop interventions and treatments to work with diverse clients. Regarding the application of skills in working with clients, Liu and Clay (2002) suggested mental health professionals should go through a series of steps such as evaluating relevant cultural aspects for the client, determining how and when to incorporate cultural and social issues, and examining potential treatments. School psychologists are also called to use their skills in working with parents, staff, and other school personnel. When presenting workshops or providing consultation services, school psychologists need to evaluate the group of people they will be working with and determine what multicultural issues might impact their approach (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002). When beginning to work with families in schools, school psychologists should evaluate the impact of the family system and culture on the student to develop delivery systems accordingly (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002). Other professionals such as Coleman and Baskin (2003) have suggested that counselors who have developed skills in working with diverse populations were aware of how to adjust their approach to meet the student's needs, the school culture, and the community as a whole. Therefore, the goal of

developing ones skills is to understand and use practices that will help create a trusting relationship, instead of potentially hindering it due to cultural misunderstandings on the part of the school psychologist.

The path to developing multicultural competence is a life long process (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002). There is no set guarantee that through acquiring personal awareness, knowledge, and skills that one will be an expert in working with students of diverse backgrounds; however, from the path of developing multicultural competence, the hope is that one will become more effective in service delivery. Additionally, one should not view each of the areas as entirely separate, but more as intertwined and dependent upon each other. Fowers and Davidov (2006) stated that, "cultural competence is not simply about culture, and behavioral capacities.... but rather one must internalize and embody this knowledge in a profound way, making it part of one's character, not just an addition to one's behavioral repertoire" (pg. 588).

School Psychology Training and State Demographics

Along with gaining multicultural competencies in the field of school psychology, practitioners must also hold a certain set of standards to practice as school psychologists. School psychology training programs are guided by the standards set forth by National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). While each state determines their own certification process, the training programs of school psychology follow the NASP standards and requirements. According to the *Standards for Training and Field Placement Programs in School Psychology Manual,* the minimum level of training NASP recognizes from its practitioners is an Educational Specialist (Ed. S.) degree with at least 60 graduate credits and a 1200-hour internship in the school setting (National Association of School Psychologists, 2000b). NASP also recognizes practitioners who have completed Doctoral (Ph. D.) degrees in school psychology who have completed a minimum

of 90 graduate credits, have completed a dissertation, and have a 1500 hour internship (National Association of School Psychologists, 2000b). NASP practitioners may also become a nationally certified school psychologist through the National Certification for School Psychologists (NCSP). To become a nationally certified school psychologist, practitioners must graduate from an approved training program, hold an Ed. S. degree, obtain a passing score on the School Psychology Praxis II examination, and have completed a 1200-hour internship (National Association of School Psychologists, 2000b).

Along with the requirements from NASP regarding certification, some graduate and doctoral training programs have been developing their programs to have a stronger multicultural emphasis so students are prepared for their diverse roles. For example, Rogers (2006) examined 17 graduate and doctoral school psychology programs considered "exemplary" in the field in providing multicultural training to school psychology students. Rogers (2006) found 94% of students were required to take a course related to diversity issues (e.g. Bilingual Assessment, School Psychology Services to Minority Populations), 18% of the programs had a second-language course requirement, all students in the study were exposed to diverse clients in their fieldwork, 59% of the programs offered specialized training for specific racial and ethnic groups, and 24% of the faculty were bilingual.

However, while Rogers (2006) found some exemplary programs providing more in-depth training, it is still unclear the extent to which all of the programs in school psychology are preparing their students. While less recent than Roger's research, Ochoa, Rivera, & Ford (1997) found in surveying more than 1,500 school psychologists from eight states in the United States that around 70% of the respondents who were trained in bilingual assessment did not feel their training was adequate. Ochoa's and Rogers's findings indicate some programs are taking

initiatives to develop training programs which prepare school psychology students to service a diverse student population, but the training programs may not be fully developed or do not meet the needs for real world application in the schools.

Wisconsin

In the state of Wisconsin there are seven training programs which offer Masters (M. A. or M. S.), Educational Specialist (Ed. S.), and Doctoral (Ph. D.) degrees in school psychology. Only two of the seven programs offer doctoral degrees in school psychology. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) provides graduates with the licensure or certification as a school psychologist. The minimum training required is a post-masters degree with 30 credits including a supervised internship of 1200 hours. More recent graduates will complete an Ed. S. degree to meet the standards of the National Association of School Psychologists and university requirements (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2008).

Similar to the change in population across the United States, the student population in Wisconsin is becoming increasingly diverse. For example, during the 1996-1997 school year, 82.6% of the student population was classified as Caucasian. Currently, for the 2008-2009 school year, 76.4% of the student population is Caucasian, indicating an increase in the diverse and multicultural student population in the state (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2009a). One specific student group that has been increasing in size is the Hispanic population. During the 1996-1997 school year, 3.5% of the student population was Hispanic. For the 2008-2009 school year, the Hispanic population has more than doubled since 1996, with 8% of the student population being Hispanic (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2009a). According to DPI, there are over 85 different languages spoken in Wisconsin's public schools (2005). In the 1998-1999 school year, 97.1% of students in Wisconsin Public Schools were

English Proficient. For the 2008-2009 school year, 94.5% of students in Wisconsin Public Schools were English Proficient. The decrease of students being proficient has been impacted by the increase (3.4% for 2008-2009 school year) of Spanish and other culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) speaking students who have limited English proficiency (LEP) (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2009b).

Arizona

There are three training programs in Arizona for school psychology. The degrees are only at the Educational Specialist (Ed. S.) and Doctoral (Ph. D.) level. According to the Arizona Department of Education Certification Unit, to become a certified school psychologist in the state of Arizona, practitioners need to have a Masters or more advanced degree from an accredited university with at least 60 graduate credit hours, and/or a Doctoral degree, and a 1200-hour supervised internship (Arizona Department of Education, 2009b). Additionally, the Arizona Department of Education recognizes professionals who are bilingual by awarding a bilingual education endorsement (BEE). To hold the BEE, practitioners must: 1) hold a valid education license and 2) have completed a bilingual education program from an accredited university, taken certain bilingual classes, or show verification of proficiency in another language (Arizona Department of Education, n.d).

In Arizona, the population has also been changing. During the 1999-2000 school year, 33% of the student population in Arizona public schools was Hispanic (Arizona Department of Education, 2004). For the 2008-2009 school year, 42% of the Arizona public school population was Hispanic (Arizona Department of Education, 2009a). According to SchoolDataDirect (2009), approximately 54.6% of the student population in Arizona public schools comes from a diverse background. Additionally, in Arizona from 1990-2000 there has been a 78% increase of

students speaking a language other than English (United States Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2002b). Information from SchoolDataDirect (2009) also showed that for 2007, 12.1% of the students in Arizona were English Language Learners (ELL).

Roles of School Psychologists

Within the education system, school psychologists have many different roles. School psychologists are to aid students in the classroom academically, but also with their personal, emotional, and social development. The areas of expertise of school psychologists impact how they will interact with diverse populations and what strategies and skills to use. As educators', school psychologists are called to be advocates and leaders for the students they serve. According to the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), school psychologists work with students with disabilities and students who have special talents and teachers to provide consultation, evaluation, intervention, prevention research, and planning (2003). A large portion of a school psychologist's job is assessing students for special education services. However, many school psychologists are spending more time with intervention-oriented assessment, rather than traditional assessments (Reschly, 2000).

In working with students of diverse populations, Lopez and Rogers (2001) found 89 competencies school psychologists should have. The competencies are broken down into broad categories in areas of assessment, consultation, counseling, culture, language (in relation to English Language Learners), laws and regulations, professional characteristics, report writing, research, theoretical paradigms, working with interpreters, working with organizations, and working with parents (Lopez & Rogers, 2001). Within these competencies, school psychologists need to have awareness, skills and knowledge to provide services to a CLD student body.

Evaluation

Currently, the main role of a school psychologist is to assess students for special education. With the large number of culturally and linguistically diverse students (CLD), school psychologists need to be able to provide nondiscriminatory assessment. Not only is it best practice for school psychologists to use nondiscriminatory assessment, it is also mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that evaluations and assessments are not to discriminate based on racial or cultural backgrounds and are to be given in the student's native language (IDEA, 2004). Nondiscriminatory assessment should be practiced using many different types of information, rather than one single test (Ortiz, 2002; Scribner, 2002). Ortiz (2002) contended there is no assessment that is completely unbiased, but the goal should be the reduction of biased assessment and to provide assessment in the least discriminatory way.

When providing nondiscriminatory assessment services, school psychologists first need to understand biased assessment. Bias in assessment comes in different forms: the cultural content within a test, the linguistic demands in a test, and the lack of representation in norm samples of individuals from diverse backgrounds (Rhodes, Ochoa, & Ortiz, 2005). Cultural bias is where the larger or dominant culture's values, beliefs, and ideas are embedded in the test and are given to individuals who do not have the same background. School psychologists need to be aware that intelligence tests are not culture free and mostly reflect the culture where the test was developed. However, psychometrically speaking, no such bias has been found in the assessments such as with structure, test construction, and validity (Ortiz, 2002). Rhodes, Ochoa, & Ortiz (2005) suggest tests have cultural loading because of the embedded cultural content and the fact that the student may not have knowledge of the culture. Along with cultural loading, tests are also linguistically demanding and are biased against the students who have not yet mastered the

English language (Rhodes, Ochoa, & Ortiz, 2005). Finally, tests can be biased because of their norms, where tests are only normed on a small number of diverse individuals (Rhodes, Ochoa, & Ortiz, 2005). With these areas of potential bias for discriminatory assessment, school psychologists need to be very aware of ways to lessen possible discrimination and choose assessments that are the least biased toward the student.

In their role of assessing students for special education, school psychologists can lessen discriminatory assessment by using a variety of services, interventions, and perspectives. Ortiz (2002) suggested a ten-step framework for providing services. For example, school psychologists should assess and evaluate the learning ecology by understanding the student as a unique individual within a variety of environments (culture, school, etc). School psychologists should also evaluate the student's opportunity for learning, language proficiency, and language development history. They should be knowledgeable in the variety of assessments available ranging from nonverbal, to bilingual and traditional assessments (Ortiz, 2002). When choosing assessments, school psychologists should be aware of the norms, the psychometric properties, and the cultural loading of the tests. For example, intelligence tests, which have high linguistic demands, should not be used with English Language Learners (ELL), as such tests are inherently biased (Figueroa, 1990). School psychologists need to be able to view all information in a comprehensive way to understand the student's development.

Additionally, school psychologists can use more evidence-based assessment for evaluation of a student's academic skills. For example, Curriculum-Based Measurements (CBMs) give nondiscriminatory data of a student's ability level and at the same time can the monitor progress the student is making (VanDerHeyden & Burns, 2005). Research has also shown that CBMs can be a good indicator of identifying students for special education services

and reducing the amount of students from diverse backgrounds qualifying for services (VanDerHeyden & Burns, 2005). Fore III, Burke, and Martin (2006) believe using CMBs may be a non-biased way to assess African American student for special education services.

When assessing CLD students, school psychologists need to be aware of how acculturation affects the student's acquisition of cultural knowledge (Rhodes, Ochoa, & Ortiz, 2005; Scribner, 2002). Understanding a student's level of acculturation will serve as a guide for psychologists when deciding how to assess the student and plan for interventions. In developing interventions, school psychologists need to take into account how the interventions were developed and the norms used. Ingraham and Oka (2006) explained when working with evidence-based interventions (EBI), school psychologists need to be aware that many of the interventions are developed in and around the Western culture and may not be transferable to other diverse groups.

Specifically when working with English Language Learners (ELL), school psychologists need to be aware of the development of language proficiency and apply appropriate interventions and assessments. In *Best Assessment and Intervention Practices with Second Language Learners*, Scribner (2002) described various competencies school psychologists needed to have when working with ELL students. For example, school psychologists needed to understand how a student acquires a second language and also help teachers set up their instruction to accommodate the students (Scribner, 2002). Other competencies included advocating for a supportive school wide climate, staff development training and education, and encouraging collaborative teaching and learning practices. Finally, Scribner (2002) advocated for early and longer-term interventions when working with ELL students to provide them support in a variety of ways to help their adjustment to the culture, language and school environment.

Prevention and Intervention

Along with evaluations, school psychologists also provide prevention and intervention services to students. One component school psychologists provide is counseling and mental health services. When providing counseling services, all practitioners need to be cognizant of cultural values, but at the same time need to be aware that traditional counseling theories have been developed to use with more American western populations and not diverse populations (D'Andrea & Daniels, 1995). Therefore, school psychologists are called on to be cautious when applying those theories and interventions to diverse student populations and students in general who vary in values, traditions, and cultural assimilation. To help with this dilemma, Coleman and Wampold (2003) suggested using culturally specific treatments where the treatments respect the client's background and also take into account the client's worldview. Along with this idea is an error of caution; many culturally specific treatments are very individualized and may not generalize to other individuals (Coleman & Wampold, 2003). Thus, the goal must then be to find a balance of treatments, which meet the student's individual needs and acknowledge cultural differences.

Along with counseling, one area of prevention services is with crisis response. Typically, school psychologists are part of a crisis team. To be advocates for the diverse student population school psychologists need to take into account the community and student body they are providing information to when a crisis does arise (Silva, 2004). One such way school psychologists can make sure the community and the student body is represented is having community and parents be part of the crisis team. Additionally, if a crisis does happened cultural brokers and other school-community liaisons should be available to provide translations, communication services, and emotional support (Silva, 2004). For example, when suicide rates

had increased substantially in the Red Lake District practitioners from the school district gathered together with the community and elders to develop a plan to reduce the number of student suicides (Krumm, 2007). By working together with community members for prevention and intervention services, school psychologist are providing multicultural competent services to their diverse student body.

Consultation

With consultation services, school psychologists will be interacting with diverse consultees and clients. Various theories and techniques have been incorporated into providing culturally competent consultation services. For example, Sheridan (2000) suggested how multicultural aspects can be threaded into conjoint behavioral consultation, and Ingraham (2000) defined a conceptual framework of multicultural school consultation. These frameworks offer insights in how to provide multicultural consultation services.

Throughout the different stages of consultation, multicultural services can be applied. Ingraham (2000) suggested that before the consultation process even starts the consultant needs to understand their own culture and other cultures. In the problem identification and goal development stages, consultants need to be aware that the consultees may have a different viewpoint of the problem because of their culture (Sheridan, 2000). Therefore, it was suggested when discussing the problem and setting goals, the consultee's beliefs and strategies should be incorporated as much as possible (Sheridan, 2000). Throughout the consultation process, school psychologists need to be aware of power differentials and try to create trusting and safe environments (Ingraham, 2003). Trusting safe environments can be created by acknowledging cultural issues and at the same time helping reduce resistance of the client (Ingraham, 2000; Sheridan, 2000). Along with the more general guidelines to providing multicultural consultation,

suggestions have been given in how to work with specific groups. Shin and Holcomb-McCoy (2005) suggested when working with some Asian parents and families, counselors needed to have a solid understanding of the core family values, parenting practices, intergenerational acculturation gap, and language barriers. In consultation, Shin and Holcomb-McCoy's suggestions could be applied to all ethnic minority groups also.

One important aspect of multicultural consultation is working with interpreters. School psychologists need to be aware of how to interact properly with interpreters and understand the impact working with interpreters can have on their consultation process (Sheridan, 2000). Before the consultation process, there are some practices to consider when working with interpreters. First of all, the consultant should meet with the interpreter beforehand and give an overview of the session and discuss issues of confidentiality (Lopez, 2002; Rhodes, Ochoa, & Ortiz, 2005). During the sessions, the interpreter should sit next to the consultant and the consultant should speak to the consultees, not the interpreter (Lopez, 2002; Rhodes, Ochoa, & Ortiz, 2005). It was also recommended the consultant give brief statements to give the interpreter time to translate the sentence (Lopez, 2002). After the session is over, debriefing sessions should occur with the interpreter and consultant to discuss the session (Lopez, 2002; Rhodes, Ochoa, & Ortiz, 2005). Overall, the consultant should be reminded that when working with interpreters, sessions take longer and the consultant should account for the additional time in planning (Lopez, 2002).

Assessment of Multicultural Competence

To rate a practitioners level of multicultural competence various assessments have been developed. Most assessments developed have been based on Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis' (1992) model of multicultural competence in areas of awareness, knowledge, and skills (cited in Kitaoka, 2005). The most common type of assessment used for understanding ones multicultural

competence is a self-report Likert scale survey or a checklist. Currently there is also a push to develop different assessments such as the use of portfolios, interviews, and observations (Ponterotto & Potere, 2003).

One of the most common instruments is the Multicultural Awareness Knowledge Skills Survey (MAKASS), which was developed by D'Andrea, Daniels, and Heck (Ponterotto & Potere, 2003). This instrument is a 60-item, four-point Likert self-report scale (strongly disagree/very limited to strongly agree/very aware/very good) composed of one area measuring knowledge/skills and another area measuring awareness (Ponterotto, & Potere, 2003). The MAKASS was developed to be used for instructional objectives and training programs (Kocarek, Talbot, Batka, & Anderson, 2001).

The Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI) was developed by Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, and Wise in 1994 (cited in Kitaoka, 2005). The instrument was developed to view multicultural counseling competencies from a variety of factors rather than Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis' three-part model. The MCI is a self-report four-point Likert scale with responses ranging from very inaccurate to very accurate and measures four factors of awareness, knowledge, skills, and relationship (Kitaoka, 2005). For the MCI, the relationship component refers to the counselor's interaction with diverse clients such as developing trust and rapport (Kitaoka, 2005).

A third instrument is the Multicultural School Psychology Counseling Competency Scale (MSPCCS), and was developed by Rogers and Ponterotto (cited in Kitaoka, 2005). The scale was developed to assess graduate trainee's level of multicultural competencies and was used to inform research and training programs (Rogers & Ponterotto, 1997). The MSPCCS is different from the first two instruments as it is an observer-report instead of a self-report, and it uses

language specific to the field of school psychology; however, it was based on Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis' model (cited in Kitaoka, 2005).

Specifically for school counselors, Holocomb-McCoy and Meyers (1999) developed the Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey (MCCTS). The instrument was created to measure a school counselor's perceived level of multicultural competence (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005). The MCCTS is a self- report four-point Likert scale with responses ranging from extremely competent to not competent. The MCCTS measures the five categories of knowledge, awareness, multicultural terminology, knowledge of racial identity development theories, and skills (Holcomb-McCoy, 2005). Additionally, Holcomb-McCoy developed a checklist called the School Counselor Multicultural Competence Checklist. The checklist includes 51 statements where practitioners indicate if they feel they have met the competency or have not met the competency (Holcomb-McCoy, 2004). The checklist provides an informal way for practitioners to evaluate their own competencies.

Along with the assessments, portfolios have also been used as an alternative measure of multicultural competence. Coleman and Hau (2003) suggested that the use of portfolios helped trainees and professionals experience a self-reflective process incorporating a variety of ways to demonstrate their development. The portfolios provided an in-depth analysis of the trainees and professional path to developing competence (Coleman & Hau, 2003).

While assessment instruments provide helpful information in understanding school psychologists' multicultural competence, they also have some limitations. Kitaoka (2005) suggested practitioners needed to be aware that the assessments may be measuring different things based upon the models they were developed for or from. For example, the instrument could be based upon Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis' three-factor model (1992), but in fact could

be measuring a multidimensional concept or other different ideas (Kitaoka, 2005). Other areas of concern are the test takers' frame of reference and the definition of culture. Kitaoka (2005) explained most multicultural competency assessments do not define what frame of reference the test taker should apply when filling out the instrument. Findings could be different if the test taker responds to the test when only thinking about working with a specific culture rather than many different diverse clients (Kitaoka, 2005). Additionally, many of the instruments only refer to racial and ethnic differences and do not encompass all the vast diverse groups based on sexual orientation, gender, social class, and/or disability.

Chapter III: Methodology

The goal of this study was to understand and analyze the perceived multicultural competencies of school psychologists in Wisconsin and Arizona. This chapter includes information regarding the selection and description of the sample used in the study. The chapter describes the instrumentation used in the study along with data collection procedures and data analysis. Additionally, limitations of the study will be discussed.

Subject Selection and Description

The study used a convenience sample of school psychologists who were members of the Wisconsin School Psychologist Association (WSPA) and the Arizona Association of School Psychologists (AASP). The sample included practicing school psychologists, trainers of school psychologists, and school psychology graduate students from both states. This population included both male and female school psychologists. All participation was voluntary, and participants acknowledged their consent to participate by clicking on the link included in the survey. The participants were selected from among all those who completed the questionnaires if they identified themselves as members of the target population. There were a total of 108 respondents (n=34 from Arizona, and n=74 from Wisconsin, respectively).

Instrumentation

Prior to implementation, the University of Wisconsin-Stout Institutional Review Board approved the study. The survey used in the study was adapted with permission from Dr. Holcomb-McCoy's Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised (MCCTS-R). Modifications were made to adapt the survey for school psychologists. Since the survey was adapted, no measures of validity or reliability have been documented as the survey was designed specifically for this study. At best this study can be said to have face validity.

The survey contained three parts including: 1) a demographic information, 2) a Likert-type response section where the participants had to answer questions regarding their multicultural competence, and 3) an open comments section where participants had to respond to questions regarding training experiences and areas of future growth. The survey consisted of twenty-seven questions (A finalized copy of the survey is included in Appendix A) and took approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete.

Data Collection Procedures

The surveys were dispersed through the University of Wisconsin-Stout's online *SelectSurveyASP Advanced 8.1.6*. The surveys were sent out two different ways to accommodate the regulations of the Wisconsin and Arizona memberships. For the WSPA, the e-mail addresses of the members were gained from the state association membership committee. The e-mail address were put into a list-serve and sent a link to the survey. For the AASP, an e-mail with the survey link was sent to the membership chair and then distributed/forwarded the survey to their membership. Each survey had its own separate link to keep the respondent answers from Wisconsin and Arizona separate for data analysis and comparisons. The study allowed for anonymous participation. No identifying information was liked to the identities of the respondents expect the membership state the respondents belonged to. The survey was deployed from October 2008 to February 2009 to allow for and extended response time during Fall and Winter Breaks. Eighty (80) surveys were received from WSPA and 38 were received from AASP for a total of 118 survey responses. Out of the 118 surveys received and as previously stated, a total of 108 were used for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the *Statistical Package for Social Sciences* (SPSS) *for Windows* 15.0 (SPSS, 2006). Item analysis was implemented to report the frequencies and percentages for the response to each survey item. Demographic information of the participants such as gender, ethnicity, years of experience, degree earned, and current position also played a role in the data analysis. These variables provided a means for cross-tabulations and comparisons of responses among the participants.

Limitations

There were several limitations to the study. First, because the study was adapted and changed from its original format there were no reliability or validity measures for the survey. A second limitation was the gap in the size of the respondent rates from Wisconsin and Arizona. There were more than double the respondents from Wisconsin than Arizona. This could be due to the fact that practitioners in Wisconsin were familiar with receiving graduate research projects from the University of Wisconsin-Stout whereas respondents in Arizona may not be familiar with the university. Another limitation was the low response rate to the study, which might be due to the fact that it was an online survey versus a traditional mailed survey. Respondents may have overlooked the e-mail of the survey or may have not filled it out because it was online. Additionally, with the survey responses the respondents may have not answered all the questions honestly due to the self-rating nature of the survey. The questions were very subjective in nature making it harder to give a "true" picture of one's multicultural competence.

Chapter IV: Results

This chapter includes the results of the survey completed by school psychologists in Arizona and Wisconsin. In this chapter demographic information will be presented, followed by a discussion of the research questions related to the survey.

Demographic Information

The first section of the survey contained basic demographic information. The surveys were sent out to the school psychology associations of Arizona and Wisconsin. Eighty (80) surveys were received from WSPA and 38 from AASP, respectively. A total of 118 survey responses were received, but only 108 were used for data analysis.

Of the 108 participants, 22.2% were male (n=24) and 77.8% were female (n=84). When broken down by states and gender, respondents from Arizona were composed of 29.4% male (n=10) and 70.6% female (n=24). Participant from Wisconsin included 18.9% male (n=14) and 81.1% female (n=60) (see Table 1). Regarding ethnicity, 88.9% of participants self-identified as Caucasian (n=96). More respondents from Wisconsin self-identified as Caucasian (97.3%) compared to Arizona (70.6%). The largest group of school psychologists surveyed held Masters degrees (48.1%). Respondents from Arizona (n=20) held more doctorate degrees (58.8%) whereas school psychologists from Wisconsin (n=41) held more Masters degrees (55.4%). Overall, 34.3% of school psychologists (n=37) responded to have 15 years of experience or more as practicing school psychologists. Of the school psychologists surveyed, 84.3% self-identified as practicing school psychologists (n=91). The majority of the participants (n=35) worked in rural settings (32.4%) than in urban or suburban settings. However, 44.1% school psychologists from Arizona (n=15) worked in urban settings, as compared to 40.5% of the school

psychologists from Wisconsin (n=30). Finally, when asked about school setting, most of the participants worked in public schools (n=92).

Table 1

Demographic Information of Participants

Demographic	Arizona n = 34		Wisconsin n = 74		Total N = 108	
	N	P	N	P	N	P
Gender						
Male	10	29.4	14	18.9	24	22.2
Female	24	70.6	60	81.1	84	77.8
Ethnicity						
African American	3	8.8	0	0	3	2.8
Caucasian	24	70.6	72	97.3	96	88.9
Latino/Hispanic	4	11.8	0	0	4	3.7
Multiracial	1	2.9	1	1.4	2	1.9
Other	2	5.9	1	1.4	3	2.7
Degree Earned						
Masters	11	32.4	41	55.4	52	48.1
Educational Specialist	3	8.8	27	36.5	30	27.8
Doctorate	20	58.8	6	8.1	26	24.1
Years of Experience						
0-1	3	8.8	15	20.3	18	16.7
2-5	4	11.8	13	17.6	17	15.7
6-10	5	14.7	11	14.9	16	14.8
11-14	6	17.6	9	12.2	15	13.9
15 and above	16	47.1	21	28.4	37	34.3
Not Answered	0	0	5	6.8	5	4.6
Current Position						
Student	2	5.9	7	9.4	9	8.3
Practicing	30	88.2	61	82.4	91	84.3
Trainer	0	0	3	4.1	3	2.8
Consultant	0	0	1	1.4	1	.9
Private Practice	1	2.9	0	0	1	.9
Employment Setting						
Urban	15	44.1	11	14.9	26	24.1
Suburban	12	35.3	20	27.0	32	29.6
Rural	5	14.7	30	40.5	35	32.4
School Setting						
Public	29	85.3	63	85.1	92	85.2
Private	2	5.9	0	0	2	1.8
Charter	1	2.9	0	0	1	.9
Other	1	2.9	1	1.4	2	1.8
Not Answered	1	2.9	10	13.5	11	10.2

Research Questions

The following three research questions were posed for this study. Each research question is followed by an exploration of the relevant data collected in the online survey.

Research Question 1. Do school psychologists in Wisconsin and Arizona feel competent in providing services to students from diverse backgrounds?

In the first section of Likert-type questions (1-Strongly Disagree to 4-Strongly Agree), the most common response for all of the questions from the participants was "agree" (see Table 2). When the responses were broken down by each state the majority of the participants also answered "agree" to the questions. Of the competencies addressed, the respondents felt most comfortable (strongly agree, 63.2%) with being able to discuss how environmental factors such as poverty can influence academic achievement (see Table 2). The largest portion of respondents felt the least comfortable with discussing theories of racial and/or ethnic identity development (disagree, 25.9%), being aware of community resources (disagree, 36.8%), discussing patterns that impact students perception of school (disagree, 30.6%), and discussing theories of language acquisition (25.2%).

The responses revealed a higher number of participants from Arizona felt more competent and answered more questions with "strongly agree". For example, 55.9% of the participants from Arizona (n=19) answered, "strongly agree" with assessing their own racial and ethnic identity. Fifty-five percent of the respondents in Arizona (n=19) also answered, "strongly agree" with being able to discuss the potential bias of assessment instruments. The only question where both groups of participants had the highest response in the "strongly agree" category was discussing how environmental factors can impact student achievement (N=76, 63.2%). Additionally, when the total mean score was taken from the responses of the participants in all of

the questions, the mean scores were higher for participants in Arizona than in Wisconsin (see Table 5). The fact that Arizona school psychologists had higher mean scores than school psychologists from Wisconsin, indicated that school psychologists from Arizona perceived themselves to be more competent in providing services to a diverse student body than school psychologists in Wisconsin.

In the second set of Likert-type questions (Never to Always), most of the participants answered "often" to the questions and on one question answered "sometimes" regarding training (see Table 3). The majority of participants from Arizona and Wisconsin indicated they "often" used culturally appropriate interventions (52.8%) and appropriate instruments (43.9%). In the last question, 38.2% of the participants from Arizona (n=13) indicated they "always" participate in continuing professional development training regarding multicultural issues, whereas 48.6% of the participants from Wisconsin (n=36) selected "sometimes" with participating in continuing professional development of multicultural issues.

Table 2

Multicultural Competencies in AZ and WI (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree)

Questions	Strongly Disagree			Disagree			Agree			Strongly Agree		
	AZ	WI	All	AZ	WI	All	AZ	WI	All	AZ	WI	All
I am able to discuss theories of racial and/or ethnic identity development	0 0	4.1% N=3	2.8% N=3	11.8% N=4	32.4% N=24	25.9% N=28	64.7% N=22	56.8% N=42	59.3% N=64	23.5% N=8	6.8% N=5	12.0% N=13
I have assessed my own racial and ethnic identity	0 0	0 0	0 0	8.8% N=3	16.2% N=12	13.9% N=15	35.3% N=12	66.2% N=49	56.5% N=61	55.9% N=19	17.6% N=13	29.6% N=32
I can identify racist aspects of educational institutions	0 0	0 0	0 0	2.9% N=1	13.5% N=10	10.2% N=11	61.8% N=21	70.3% N=52	67.6% N=73	35.3% N=12	16.2% N=12	22.2% N=24
I can discuss how culture affects the help-seeking behaviors of students	0 0	0 0	0 0	2.9% N=1	16.2% N=12	12.0% N=13	67.6% N=23	68.9% N=51	65.8% N=74	29.4% N=10	14.9% N=11	19.4% N=21
I can discuss how environmental factors such as poverty can influence the academic achievement of students	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	23.5% N=8	41.9% N=31	36.8% N=39	73.5% N=25	56.8% N=42	63.2% N=67
I can identify unfair policies that discriminate against students of culturally different backgrounds	0 0	0 0	0 0	2.9% N=1	8.1% N=6	6.5% N=7	52.9% N=18	78.4% N=58	70.4% N=76	44.1% N=15	13.5% N=10	23.1% N=25
I can discuss the potential bias of assessment instruments	0 0	0 0	0 0	2.9% N=1	4.1% N=3	3.7% N=4	41.2% N=14	62.2% N=46	55.6% N=60	55.9% N=19	33.8% N=25	40.7% N=44
I can explain test information to culturally different parents	0 0	0 0	0 0	2.9% N=1	14.9% N=11	11.3% N=12	52.9% N=18	64.9% N=48	62.3% N=66	41.2% N=14	18.9% N=14	26.4% N=28
I can discuss how culture influences parents' discipline and parenting practices	0 0	0 0	0 0	8.8% N=3	13.5% N=10	12.0% N=13	55.9% N=19	68.9% N=51	64.8% N=70	35.3% N=12	17.6% N=13	23.1% N=25
I can work with community leaders and other community members to assist with student and family concerns of diverse learners	0 0	1.4% N=1	.9% N=1	11.8% N=4	21.6% N=16	18.5% N=20	61.8% N=21	58.1% N=43	59.3% N=64	26.5% N=9	18.9% N=14	21.3% N=23
I am aware of community resources available for students and families of diverse backgrounds	0 0	1.4% N=1	.9% N=1	14.7% N=5	49.5% N=34	36.8% N=39	55.9% N=19	44.6% N=33	49.1% N=52	23.5% N=8	8.1% N=6	13.2% N=14
I am able to discuss interaction patterns that might influence ethnic minority students' perceptions of inclusion in the school community	0 0	0 0	0 0	20.6% N=7	35.1% N=26	30.6% N=33	58.8% N=20	58.1% N=43	58.3% N=63	20.6% N=7	6.8% N=5	11.1% N=12
I can discuss theories of second language acquisition	0 0	1.4% N=1	.9% N=1	14.7% N=5	29.7% N=22	25.2% N=27	47.1% N=16	55.4% N=41	53.3% N=57	38.2% N=13	12.2% N=9	20.6% N=22

Table 3

Multicultural Competencies in AZ and WI (Never to Always)

Question (s)	Never			Sometimes			Often			Always		
	AZ	WI	All	AZ	WI	All	AZ	WI	All	AZ	WI	All
I use culturally appropriate instruments and procedures when I assess students.	0 0	2.7% N=2	1.9% N=2	2.9% N=1	25.7% N=19	18.7% N=20	38.2% N=13	45.9% N=34	43.9% N=47	55.9% N=19	27.5% N=19	25.3% N=38
I use culturally appropriate interventions (i.e. academic, behavioral, etc.).	0 0	1.4% N=1	.9% N=1	2.9% N=1	33.8% N=25	24.5% N=26	50.0% N=17	52.7% N=39	52.8% N=56	41.2% N=14	12.2% N=9	21.7% N=23
I participate in continuing professional development training regarding multicultural issues.	0 0	2.7% N=2	1.9% N=2	20.6% N=7	48.6% N=36	40.6% N=43	35.3% N=12	33.8% N=25	34.9% N=37	38.2% N=13	14.9% N=11	22.6% N=24

In this regard, school psychologists from Arizona reported higher mean scores relating to the implementation of multicultural competencies (see Table 4). Results show that practicing school psychologists from Arizona are more culturally-sensitive when providing assessment and intervention services to students. In addition, practicing school psychologists from Arizona participate in more continuing education courses that address issues of multicultural competence (Mean =3.19) as compared to Wisconsin participants (Mean = 2.61).

Table 4

Means for AZ and WI (Never to Always)

Question (s)	Arizona		Wisconsin	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
I use culturally appropriate instruments and procedures when I assess students.	33	3.55	74	2.95
I use culturally appropriate interventions (i.e. academic, behavioral, etc.).	32	3.41	74	2.76
I participate in continuing professional development training regarding multicultural issues.	34	3.19	74	2.61

Research Question 2. What areas do school psychologists in Arizona and Wisconsin feel they need growth in to provide competent multicultural services?

The mean scores from the Likert-type response questions indicated which areas participants felt the least competent in providing multicultural services (see Table 5). Both groups of participants felt the least competent in discussing theories of racial and ethnic identity development, having awareness of community resources available for diverse groups, and being able to discuss patterns that influence minority student's perceptions of inclusion in the school community (see Table 5). Participants from Arizona had the lowest mean score from their group (M=3.00) in areas of being able to discuss interaction patterns that might influence ethnic minority student's perceptions of inclusion in the school. School psychologists from Wisconsin had the lowest mean score from their group (M=2.59) in being aware of community resources for students and families of diverse backgrounds. In addition, participants from Wisconsin responded they have very little knowledge of discussing theories of racial and/or ethnic identity development of CLD children, youth, and their families (M=2.66).

Table 5

Means for AZ and WI (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree)

Questions	Arizona		Wisconsin	
	N	Mean	N	Mean
I am able to discuss theories of racial and/or ethnic identity development	34	3.12	74	2.66
I have assessed my own racial and ethnic identity	34	3.47	74	3.01
I can identify racist aspects of educational institutions	34	3.32	74	3.03
I can discuss how culture affects the help-seeking behaviors of students	34	3.26	74	2.99
I can discuss how environmental factors such as poverty can influence the academic achievement of students	33	3.76	73	3.58
I can identify unfair policies that discriminate against students of culturally different backgrounds	34	3.41	74	3.05
I can discuss the potential bias of assessment instruments	34	3.53	74	3.30
I can explain test information to culturally different parents	33	3.39	73	3.04
I can discuss how culture influences parents' discipline and parenting practices	34	3.26	74	3.04
I can work with community leaders and other community members to assist with student and family concerns of diverse learners	34	3.15	74	2.95
I am aware of community resources available for students and families of diverse backgrounds	32	3.09	74	2.59
I am able to discuss interaction patterns that might influence ethnic minority students' perceptions of inclusion in the school community	34	3.00	74	2.72
I can discuss theories of second language acquisition	34	3.24	73	2.79

Regarding areas of strength and training school psychologists from Arizona indicated they needed the least training on examining their own racial and ethnic identity (M=3.47), discussing environmental factors (M=3.76), and explaining testing information to culturally different parents (M=3.39). Participants from Wisconsin indicated they needed the least training on discussing environmental factors (M=3.58) and discussing the potential bias of assessment instruments (M=3.30).

Table 6

Open-Comments for Areas of Future Growth

Themes	Frequency (Number of Responses)		
	Arizona	Wisconsin	Total
All Areas	0	10	10
Assessment	1	9	10
Consultation	10	16	26
Intervention	7	19	26
Prevention	6	15	21
Specific Area (ELL, Latino, Somali)	9	2	11
Hands on Experiences	0	2	2
No Training Necessary	0	2	2
Other	0	1	1

Along with the rating scale questions, participants also answered open-comment questions regarding areas of future growth. Many of the participants gave more than one response to the open-comment questions with a wide variety of explanations. Therefore, the researcher grouped the different explanations provided by the participants into "themes" or categorical responses. The themes participants answered for areas of future growth included more training in all areas, training in assessment, consultation, intervention, and prevention, trainings for specific groups such as ELL, hands on experiences, and other (see Table 6). Due to participants giving more than one response, all responses given were added into the groups. Thus, the totals in the themes may be more than the total participants who responded to the question.

The responses were broken down into eight themes (see Table 6). There were 52 responses from participants in Wisconsin and 24 from participants in Arizona. Consultation, prevention, and intervention were areas with the highest frequencies (n=26, n=26, and n=21,

respectively), suggesting the participants needed the most training in these areas in order to provide culturally-sensitive services to ELL children and youth. Based on the information from the rating scale and open-comment questions, the participants indicated they need more growth and training in the areas of understanding theories of racial identity development, learning more about the resources in their community for diverse students, consultation, intervention and prevention issues of ELL students (see Tables 5 and 6).

Research Question 3. Are school psychologists in Wisconsin and Arizona participating in training to aid in the development of their own multicultural competence?

The participants answered a series of three open-comment questions regarding their participation in training related to diverse populations. The first question focused on receiving training with providing assessments. The participants gave many responses to the questions, thus the responses were broken down into themes. Under the assessment category, there were nine main themes that developed (see Table 7). Participants indicated they received training with assessment, which included attending state conferences, graduate coursework, district trainings, workshops or conferences, in-house training, NASP conferences, other areas, or little or no training. Some participants gave multiple responses to their answers. The multiple responses were counted for each category or theme they fell under. In receiving trainings for providing assessment, the most common area of training was provided through graduate coursework (n=37) and from participating in workshops/conferences (n=24).

Table 7

Open-Comments for Assessment

Themes	Frequency (Number of Responses)		
	Arizona	Wisconsin	Total
State Conferences	6	13	19
Graduate Classes	10	27	37
District Trainings	10	8	12
Other Workshops or Conferences	4	16	24
Own Training	0	2	5
NASP Conference	1	0	1
Consultation with Others	1	0	1
Other	2	0	2
Little or No Training	0	3	3

The second open-comment question focused on training in providing prevention/intervention services to a diverse student body. Ten themes developed from the responses of the participants (see Table 8). Participants indicated they received training to address issues of prevention/intervention by attending state conferences, graduate coursework, district trainings, other workshops or conferences, their own training, NASP conferences, professional literature reviews, consultation with others, other areas, and/or little or no training. Most participants received their training regarding prevention/intervention from graduate classes (n=20) and other conferences and workshops (n=17). The other category that had the most number of responses was in regards to having "little or no training" in providing prevention and intervention services to a diverse student body. Twelve participants indicated they did not have any training regarding prevention and intervention services for specific CLD student population.

Table 8

Open-Comments for Prevention and Intervention

Themes	Frequency (Number of Responses)		
	Arizona	Wisconsin	Total
State Conferences	1	2	3
Graduate Classes	8	12	20
District Trainings	1	2	3
Other Workshops or Conferences	7	10	17
Own Training	0	3	3
NASP Conference	1	0	1
Professional Literature	0	4	4
Consultation with Others	1	2	3
Other	2	0	2
Little or No Training	1	11	12

The last open-comment question revolved around providing multicultural competent consultation services. A total of nine themes or categories were developed from the participants' responses (see Table 9). Participants indicated they received consultation training by attending state conferences, graduate coursework, district trainings, other workshops or conferences, their own training, NASP conferences, professional literature, consultation with others, and/or little or no training. The majority of participants (n=26) indicated they received training from graduate coursework and didactic fieldwork experiences with providing consultation services for diverse students. Additionally, a large number of participants (n=14) indicated they had little or no training with providing consultation services to CLD children and youth.

Table 9

Open-Comments for Consultation

Themes	Frequency (Number of Responses)		
	Arizona	Wisconsin	Total
State Conferences	0	2	2
Graduate Classes	8	18	26
District Trainings	3	3	6
Other Workshops or Conferences	5	4	9
Own Training	2	1	3
NASP Conference	0	3	3
Professional Literature	0	2	2
Consultation with Others	3	1	3
Other	5	9	14
Little or No Training	1	11	12

Chapter V: Discussion

This chapter will include a brief summary of the study and a discussion of the result findings. Limitations will also be discussed along with concluding comments and future recommendations.

Summary

Students in the education system are becoming increasingly diverse, while school psychologists continue to be a homogeneous group. To provide necessary services, school psychologists need to develop multicultural competence. The purpose of this study was to understand and analyze the perceived multicultural competence of school psychologists in the states of Wisconsin and Arizona. The study examined the extent to which school psychologists in Wisconsin and Arizona felt competent in providing services to students from diverse backgrounds, what areas of growth were needed to provide better services to diverse students, and if school psychologists in Wisconsin and Arizona were participating in continued training related to multicultural services.

Surveys were sent to school psychologists in Arizona and Wisconsin who held membership with the Arizona Association of School Psychologists (AASP) and the Wisconsin School Psychologists Association (WSPA). The survey used in the study was adapted with permission from Dr. Holcomb-McCoy's Multicultural Counseling Competence and Training Survey-Revised (MCCTS-R). Modifications were made to adapt the survey for school psychologists. A total of 118 surveys were received and 108 surveys were used for data analysis.

Participants from Arizona had higher mean scores on the questions than subjects from Wisconsin, indicating school psychologists from Arizona self-perceived themselves to be more competent than participants in Wisconsin. Participants from Arizona participated in multicultural

training more frequently. Both groups received most of their multicultural training from graduate classes or workshops. School psychologists from Arizona and Wisconsin indicated they needed more training with consultation, intervention, and prevention services.

Discussion of Findings

While the student population of the United States is becoming increasingly diverse, the population of school psychologists servicing the diverse student body is continuing to stay relatively homogenous. Demographic results regarding the racial and ethnic background of the school psychologists surveyed is similar to previous studies. The majority of participants surveyed were Caucasian/white (88.9%), especially those from Wisconsin (97.3%) compared to a 2004-2005 NASP membership survey where 92.6% of the membership identified being Caucasian (Curtis, Lopez, Castillo, Batsche, Minch & Smith, 2008). While, there appears to be a slight increase of school psychologists from diverse backgrounds in the majority of the field there still remains a strong need to prepare and train school psychologists to service the diverse needs of the student body. Additionally, the majority of school psychologists continue to be female. From the study 77.8% of participants were female, which is on the same track from the NASP membership survey where 74% of NASP members were identified as being female (Curtis, Lopez, Castillo, Batsche, Minch & Smith, 2008). Reschly (2000) also commented that the number of female school psychologists has been increasing over the past 30 years and that trend is likely to continue.

Regarding multicultural competence in providing services to a diverse student body the majority of respondents indicated they felt comfortable with providing services to a diverse student population. Participants felt most comfortable with discussing environmental impacts on

student achievement such as poverty. Responses to this question suggest the participants have some base knowledge regarding how culture and environment impact student progress.

The participants felt the least competent in being aware of theories of racial identity development. While participants felt comfortable addressing their own racial identity, they did not feel knowledgeable in discussing general theories of racial identity development. Researchers indicate one such way to develop awareness is to understand one's own identity development and how others develop theirs as well (Sue & Sue, 2003). In addition, researchers such as Vinson and Niemeyer (2000) suggest by having a better understanding of identity development, practitioners have higher levels of multicultural competence.

In comparing participants from Wisconsin and Arizona it was found participants from Arizona held higher mean scores in the areas of providing appropriate assessments and interventions. Participants from Arizona may have higher mean scores due to the fact that they are more used to providing assessments and interventions to a diverse student body, since the student body of Arizona is more diverse than the student body of Wisconsin. Additionally, since the population as a whole in Arizona has a larger multicultural population, the school psychology training programs in Arizona may have more content in their courses related to multicultural preparation.

In terms of areas of future growth, participants indicated based on their Likert-responses and open-ended responses they need more growth and training in the areas of understanding racial identity development, consultation, and interventions, and overall trainings related to multicultural issues in the schools and working with specific populations. While training programs include information on consultation and interventions, perhaps more needs to be incorporated in how to provide these services to a diverse student body. Sheridan (2000) and

Ingraham (2000) suggest using multicultural consultation when working with diverse families. In using multicultural consultation and becoming knowledgeable about different cultures then the relationship between the consultant and consultee becomes better developed. Training programs can include this information as part of their program as a better way to service all students and possible clients. Additionally, participants, especially those from Wisconsin indicated they do not always participate in trainings regarding multicultural issues. School districts and training programs should encourage and even require their practitioners to take part in trainings regarding multicultural issues.

Participants also indicated a need of training for specific populations such as providing interventions for CLD populations. Since the population of CLD students is constantly growing, the need for school psychologists to provide competent services is critical. Rogers (2005) has also advocated for the need for specific trainings regarding bilingual assessment and interventions and how they should be a main part of the school psychologist's profession. Rogers (2006) also indicated that exemplary multicultural training programs in school psychology typically have course work related to different groups.

Finally, in receiving training regarding multicultural issues, most of the participants received a majority of the information they know about providing competent multicultural services from their graduate training programs and other workshops. These findings suggest graduate training programs are providing some support to their students regarding multicultural issues. These findings are also consistent with Rogers (2006) examination of exemplary multicultural school psychology training programs, which had course work related to servicing a diverse student body. However, the extent to which they are providing the training is unclear if it is embedded in the coursework or a separate class. Similar to where the participants indicated as

areas of growth and development some participants also indicated they had received little or no training in the areas of prevention/intervention and consultation in providing services to a diverse student population.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations existed within this study. One limitation is the survey used for the study was adapted for school psychologists. The survey was not piloted and does not have statistical information regarding validity and reliability. The survey was a self-report, which in nature gives subjective results. More recently researchers have been calling for alternative assessments in evaluating multicultural competence such as through portfolios, interviews, and observations to help balance out the subjective nature of self-reports (Ponterotto & Potere, 2003).

There are also some limitations in relation to how representative the sample of the population. The majority of the sample was composed of practicing school psychologists from Wisconsin; this sample is not representative of the population of the United States but is similar to that of the current school psychology population. Because a convenience sampling technique was used, the samples were not randomly selected, so they may contain sampling bias and may not be representative of the population. Additionally, the response rate may have been lower because they surveys were web-based and distributed through e-mail accounts. Past research has shown web-based surveys produce a lower response rate then paper surveys (Sax, Gilmartin, &Bryant, 2003). Although the extent of the generalization of this research is questionable, it is hoped that to the extent that other populations are similar to this sample, the results may be applicable.

Conclusion

Results of this study indicate there are some areas practitioners feel competent in providing services to a diverse student body, but others where they feel they have received little or no training and are not well prepared to provide competent services. In the field there is a dire need to continue to make serious changes to address the growing change in demographics in our Nation's public schools. Results from the study highlighted that participants from Wisconsin did not feel as comfortable with participants from Arizona in providing competent services to a diverse student body. Therefore, a strong dedication needs to be made to help prepare practitioners to provide competent services to a changing student body. A true commitment to multicultural training requires major changes in the way school psychology graduate programs train its students. If a multicultural program has only the skeleton of a commitment, it creates no more than false generosity (Freire, 1970), dishonesty and continued disrespect. The ultimate goal as trainers of school psychologists is to produce competent service providers to work with children and youth from CLD backgrounds. Additionally, school districts and state education departments need to make commitments as well to prepare all their educators to provide competent services to the diverse student body our nation holds. The number of students who speak another language and come from diverse backgrounds is only going to continue to increase. While the path to developing multicultural competence is life long (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002) it is urgent and essential for school psychologist to be competent services providers to all students. Thus, a continued dedication must be made by training programs, districts, states, professional organizations, and individuals to continue on the path of multicultural competence. School psychologists provide numerous services to students, parents, and school staff. By

developing multicultural competence, school psychologists can successfully navigate their numerous roles and provide successful services to a diverse student population.

Recommendations

Although this study was able to produce some valuable findings related to school psychologists' multicultural competencies, like most research endeavors, it is limited in scope. First, because the small sample of respondents from Arizona the results cannot be generalized to all practicing school psychologists in that State. In addition, the sample included in this study was particularly homogeneous in that essentially no racial diversity existed between participants. For this reason, further investigation of school psychologists' multicultural competence in other geographical areas and with more diverse samples is recommended.

Furthermore, in the areas of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and school psychologist skills, measurement instruments might also include performance-based paper-and-pencil tests. For example, a performance-based measure of school psychologists' multicultural knowledge needs to be grounded in a content domain of school psychology foundation course that addresses culturally-sensitive assessment and interventions. Similarly, measures of multicultural school psychologists' awareness should assess an individual's awareness, rather than request an individual to report self-perceptions. Instead, measurements of skills should be based on observations of actual performance and should be highly contextualized, rather than based on global ratings assumed to generalize to future performances.

Finally, future research also needs to continue exploring school psychology training programs and how well they are preparing their students for real life application of multicultural competence. While participants indicated they had classes in their training programs relating to multicultural competence it was unclear the extent to which the trainings covered a wide variety

of areas not only limited to assessment but also prevention/intervention, and consultation services. Due to these reasons training programs need to develop stronger curriculum to prepare the more homogeneous school psychology profession to work with an ever-growing heterogeneous student body.

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*Formatting for survey has been altered from original online version

Title: Assessing the Multicultural Competence of School Psychologists: Are we prepared to provide services to culturally and linguistically diverse students?

Description:
The goal of the study is to evaluate, learn, and understand the perceived level of multicultural competence of school psychologists in Wisconsin and Arizona. Through the study, information will be gathered to assess how competent school psychologist in Wisconsin and Arizona feel providing services to a growing diverse student body.

Risks and Benefits:
With every research project comes risks and benefits. One potential risk in completing the survey is that the subject may be impacted by the questions emotionally in evaluating their multicultural competence. Respondents will be assured they may withdraw at any time if uncomfortable and are encouraged to seek consultation with professional peers should this occur or to confer with research advisor or research services if any questions about the survey or study. A potential benefit in participating in the study for the subject includes self-awareness about multicultural competence in working with diverse learners and whether or not they feel adequately prepared to serve a diverse student body. Broader potential benefits of this study include a contribution to the current field of research on multicultural competence and giving insight into training programs and other educators on how to better prepare school psychologists to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Time Commitment:
Time involved in completing the survey is an estimated 30 minutes.

Confidentiality:
Confidentiality will protected with this survey. Participant information will be kept anonymous. With your participation in the study your name will not be included on any documents. We do not believe that you can be identified from any of this information.

Right to Withdraw:
Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to participate without any adverse consequences to you. However, should you choose to participate and later wish to withdraw from the study, there is no way to identify your anonymous document after it has been turned into the investigator.

IRB Approval:
This study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Wisconsin-Stout's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study meets the ethical obligations required by federal law and University policies. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the IRB Administrator.

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Multicultural Competence of School Psychologists

I. Demographics
Please fill out the following demographic information.

Please indicate your highest degree earned
__ Masters
__ Educational Specialist
__ Doctorate
__ Other, please specify

Gender
__ Male
__ Female
__ Other

Which Racial/Ethnic group do you self identify with?
__ African American/Black
__ Asian/Pacific Islander
__ Caucasian
__ Latino/Hispanic
__ Native American
__ Multiracial
__ Other, please specify

Current Professional Position
__ Student in Training
__ Practicing School Psychologist
__ University Faculty
__ Private Practice
__ Consultant
__ Other, please specify

If you are a practicing school psychologist please answer the following question: What type of district do you work at?
__ Urban
__ Suburban
__ Rural
__ Other

If you are a practicing school psychologist please answer the following question, What type of school do you work at?
_ Public
_ Private
_ Charter
_ Other, please specify

Please indicate the years of experience you have had working as a school psychologist
__ 0-1
__ 2-5
__ 6-10
__ 11-14
__ 15 and above

II. Questions
Please answer the following questions from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree

I am able to discuss theories of racial and or ethnic identity development
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I have assessed my own racial and ethnic identity
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I can identify racist aspects of educational institutions
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I can discuss how culture affects the help-seeking behaviors of students
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I can discuss how environmental factors such as poverty can influence the academic achievement of students
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I can identify unfair policies that discriminate against students of culturally different backgrounds
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I can discuss the potential bias of assessment instruments
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I can explain test information to parents of different cultures
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I can discuss how culture influences parents' discipline and parenting practices
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I can work with community leaders and other community members to assist with student and family concerns of diverse learners
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I am aware of community resources available for students and families of diverse backgrounds
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I am able to discuss interaction patterns that might influence ethnic minority students' perceptions of inclusion in the school community
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

I can discuss theories of second language acquisition
__ Strongly Agree
__ Agree
__ Disagree
__ Strongly Disagree

Please answer the following questions from Never to Often

I use culturally appropriate instruments and procedures when I assess students
__ Never
__ Sometimes
__ Often
__ Always

I use culturally appropriate interventions (i.e. academic, behavioral, etc.) with students
__ Never
__ Sometimes
__ Often
__ Always

I participate in continuing professional development training regarding multicultural issues
__ Never
__ Sometimes
__ Often
__ Always

III. Open Comments
Please answer the following open comments questions

What professional development training have you had in providing assessment services for a diverse student population? (Please explain regarding conferences, workshops, in-services, graduate classes, etc.)

What professional development training have you had in prevention and intervention services for a diverse student population? (Please explain regarding conferences, workshops, in-services, graduate classes, etc.)

What professional development training have you had in consultation services for a diverse student population? (Please explain regarding conferences, workshops, in-services, graduate classes, etc.)

What areas do you feel you need more training in to service a diverse student population (for example, intervention and prevention, assessment, and consultation, etc.)

Thank you for taking the survey!